THE RAGTIMER

JANUARY 1971

FEBRUARY 1971

PUBLISHED BY

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY

DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSICAL RAGTIME

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THE RAGTIME SOCIETY P.O. BOX 520 WESTON ONTARIO CANADA

RAGTIME...
UNDER YOUR HAT

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc.

is a non-profit corporation having the following objects:

To preserve classical ragtime music and to pursue such other activities as shall serve to maintain and develop interest in classical ragtime music and music related thereto.

NOTE:
To facilitate handling please direct all mail to the SOCIETY rather than to individuals.

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc.,
P. O. Box 520,
WESTON, Ontario,
Canada.

We hope the year-end holiday season was an enjoyable one for our members.

The SOCIETY enters another year and is much encouraged by the renewal of your support. We thank those who have renewed their membership for 1971, and remind those who have not done so that the $5.00 annual membership fee is overdue as of January 1st. each year.

This issue of THE RAGTIMER contains an announcement concerning the incorporation of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY. It is a good time to touch on the subject of the very welcome correspondence received from so many individual members. We do not have the resources available to permit us to enter into personal correspondence beyond that which is necessarily required.

THE RAGTIMER is the SOCIETY's means of corresponding with its members. When your correspondence is of interest to all members we consider the use of excerpts for inclusion in THE RAGTIMER. Please remember that your letters are always appreciated even though we often fail to reply.

At the same time, we appeal to all members to continue or to start passing along a copy of any articles, information or original material of historical or current interest to ragtimers which is in or comes into your possession so that it will be available to THE RAGTIMER in its efforts to continue a lively publication.

THE RAGTIMER is the official publication of THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc., P. O. Box 520, Weston, Ontario, Canada. All rights of THE RAGTIMER are reserved to the Corporation. Membership is $5.00 per year and includes all issues of THE RAGTIMER published during the current year. (1971 schedule anticipates six bi-monthly issues.)

AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

THE RAGTIME SOCIETY COMES OF AGE

After much consideration the executive of your SOCIETY decided to seek incorporation for the organization. As a result we are pleased to announce that the SOCIETY is now incorporated as a non-profit organization under the laws of the Province of Ontario, being effective as of June 30th, 1970.

We had reached a crossroads in our deliberations about the future of the SOCIETY..... to remain a loosely knit group dependent upon the retention of sufficient individual enthusiasm to keep going along as in the past..... or to move in the direction that would tend to establish a greater degree of permanence.

Since its inception at the beginning of 1962 through the founding efforts of John Fisher, Idamay MacInnes and Jim Kinnear, the SOCIETY with the help of its many members at large and others interested in the preservation of classical ragtime, has done much of the spade work in uncovering and researching the music of our chosen field.

Now we are closer to the true purpose of the SOCIETY..... that of "preserving" ragtime for enjoyment by those who discover the musical delight of ragtime for the first time in this and future generations. We are attempting to guarantee the opportunity of exposure to those who might not otherwise fall under the spell of an experience in the pleasures of classical ragtime music.

We hope incorporation will protect against a drift towards obscurity. It is our sincere thought that incorporation will provide a meaningful base from which THE RAGTIME SOCIETY Inc. can grow and flourish. The previous executive of the SOCIETY became the first directors of the incorporated body. The creation of permanence for the organization itself should protect its survival as an ongoing entity despite changes which must occur in its directorate as time inevitably passes by.

It is true that it is becoming increasingly more difficult to collect new knowledge belonging to the memorabilia of the classic ragtime era. Nevertheless fresh information will and does come to light from time to time. There is still with us a ragtime revival starting at the end of World War II that has tended to gain in momentum. As an historical society there is much going on in a contemporary sense that has yet to be preserved through our efforts. We count on your approval.

FOR THE

RECORD

Mr. Allen MacInnes, of Toronto, has provided us with interesting information which we are pleased to pass along to our members. Ed.

Those "Ragtimers" who belong to the Musical Box Society International are familiar with the wide variety of records available from Lee Munsick of "Nostalgia". For those members of The Ragtime Society whose interest is chiefly "Rag" the following records could be enjoyable. These are records of piano rolls and phonograph cylinders mainly of rags and contemporary music. They are very listenable but, of course, do not have the same variety and colour of a recorded performer. However, they are a worth while addition to any Ragtimer's library. Lee has some 500 records catalogued so if you are interested write him for the catalogue, but these are about the only "Rag" records (except for 'The 86 Years Of Eubie Blake'). Many of the records are on mechanical music reproductions machines.

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Ragtime Oriole
A Coon Band Contest
Smokey Mokes
Tickled To Death
Buzzer Rag
Panama Rag

Pianola Jazz
Early piano jazz and ragtime played on pianola rolls.

Side A
Skip Along (Cakewalk)
Maple Leaf Rag
Blame It On The Blues (Rag)
For Me And My Gal
Aunt Hagar's Blues
I'll Dance Till De Sun Breaks Through (Cakewalk)
Rose Of Washington Square
(all from 65 note rolls)

Side B
Georgia Camp Meeting
Stumbling
French Trot
Alabama Dream
Creole Bells
Old Fashioned Girl
(all 65 note rolls except 1 & 6)

Cylinder Jazz
Early jazz and ragtime recordings from phonograph cylinders 1897 - 1928.

Side A
Make That Trombone Laugh (Scharf) Harry Roderman's Jazz Orch.
International Cakewalk (Reinard) Fred Van Epps - banjo and piano
Hungarian Rag (Lenzberg) New York Military Band
At A Georgia Camp Meeting (Kerry Mills) Edison Grand Concert Band
Hiawatha Rag (Neil Moret) Ollie Oakley - banjo solo
Meadow Lark - Duke Yellman and his Orchestra

Side B
Dardanella (Bernard and Black) Harry Roderman's Jazz Orch.
Coconut Dance - Vess L. Ossman - banjo and Orch.
Nightime In Little Italy - Frisco Jazz Band
Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home - Burt Sheppard - vocal & Orch.
Hiawatha Rag (Neil Moret) Edison Concert Band
Teasing Medley - Edison Military Band
My Sumuran Gal (Medley) Shapiro - Vess L. Ossman - banjo and Orch.

SOUNDS FAMILIAR

ROGER HANKINS

THOSE BILL BAILEY SONGS
PART 3 TRANSITION SONGS

American popular music for well over a century has been strongly influenced by negro musical traditions. Successive stages in our musical development point up this influence; Minstrelsy, Ragtime, Blues and Jazz. Jazz itself is no longer just an American expression but a world-wide music. According to Henry Pleasants we are now in what future musical historians will call the Afro-American Epoch, which dominates the world musical scene much as Italian and German music dominated the world's music in previous centuries from a purely nationalistic standpoint.

The Bill Bailey songs stand about midway in the development of Afro-American music. They contain the best elements of minstrelsy, ragtime and blues and at the same time they foreshadow the future development of jazz. One of the keys to the enduring appeal of BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME is the fact that this song followed the same musical trail which was blazed by traditional jazz and the blues. Andre Hodeir has described the birth of jazz as resulting from the male-female clash of military marches and blues at the turn of the century. This description could be applied with equal validity to Hughie Cannon's 1902 hit song which is partly a march and partly a blues song.

Bill Bailey's connection with the blues stems from the fact that his songs adopted a musical style which eventually reached fulfillment twenty years later in that body of songs known as the Classic Blues. Gunther Schuller describes the process in EARLY JAZZ page 226. "Blues and early jazz met mostly in the vaudeville-minstrel shows and carnivals around the turn of the century. It was here that a part of the classic blues tradition was worked out by the professional singer-entertainer... such as Ma Rainey." The Bill Bailey songs were written primarily by the white singer-entertainer team of Hughie Cannon and John Queen, the former a vaudeville headliner and the latter a veteran of the minstrel stage. From all indications these two songwriters made a serious study of the entertainment techniques of their black counterparts.

Schuller (page 252) credits the craze for classic blues with possibly having saved jazz from oblivion during the early 20's following as it did on the novelty jazz fad which threatened to destroy jazz as a significant musical expression. The classic blues which comprised the repertoire of such female singers as Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey have been called the most meaningful secular songs ever produced in this country. They represent a return to fundamentals which mainstream jazz periodically takes to replenish itself.

This concept of 'meaning' is one I'd rather avoid for now, but the same professionally stylized elements found in the classic blues are found in an earlier stage of development in the Bill Bailey songs. The term 'meaning' suggests something religious (Has life any meaning?) and the religious factor is fundamental to the creation of jazz and the blues as well as Bill Bailey. The New Orleans marching bands at the turn of the century were giving the jazz treatment to hymns and revival songs, and the emotional appeal of early jazz and the blues is a direct result of this religious feeling. The creation of jazz, like the Bill Bailey songs, may be attributed to a particular type of religious expression. Martin Williams prefers the word 'unworthy' and admits he is using a theological term in explaining the appeal of jazz. "Jazz was created by people who consider themselves unworthy, and is an attempt by them to discover their worthiness from within." (THE JAZZ TRADITION, page 15)

Bill Bailey's close proximity to the roots of jazz lies not only in the mixture of blues and military marches, but in this religious notion of unworthiness and its corollary repentance. Mrs. Bailey is a study in religious remorse; 'I know I've done you wrong, I know I'm to blame', she moans the whole day long. The use of the word moan by a negro is explained by James Weldon Johnson in his preface to the BOOK OF AMERICAN NEGRO SPIRITUALS. The OR sound tends to be changed to O in the negro dialect. More is pronounced mo' in similar fashion mourn is changed to moan. Johnson then goes on to say that moan does not signify grief but repentance for sins. The creative energy of repentance is illustrated by John Tasker Howard in his book OUR AMERICAN MUSIC page 683. He describes an actual experience where a negro song was created spontaneously at an emotion charged religious gathering. "From the depth of some sinner's remorse, came a real negro moan sobbed in musical cadence. From somewhere in the bowed gathering another voice improvised a response. The moan sounded again, louder. Other voices responded forming new musical phrases and so a new song was born."

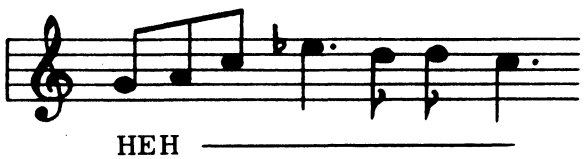
The religious element contained in the Bill Bailey songs places them far above the average ragtime song of the period. At first glance the chorus of BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME would appear to be a march. It has the traditional 16 bar structure associated with the march; 6 bars tonic, 8 bars dominant and 2 bars tonic. Just to satisfy my curiosity once I glanced through about 60 marches by the pseudo March King E. T. Paull and found 75 themes which used this structure. Sousa, Hall and others also made extensive use of this standard march progression. It soon becomes evident that Bill Bailey is a march only in the sense that WHEN THE SAINTS GO MARCHING IN is a march. They both in reality are hymn tunes, associated with hand clapping, although Bill Bailey has so many built-in negro elements it doesn't leave any room for the improvised responses. A close look at Hughie Cannon's masterpiece reveals a surprising number of traditional negro musical devices and most of these result from the religious overtones of the song.

A literal interpretation of the lyrics to BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME suggests a revival or camp meeting atmosphere. Mrs. Bailey is not speaking to Bill but to a crowd. "And to that crowd, she yelled out loud." What effect her appeal had on the crowd can be judged by Hughie Cannon's description of her vocal abilities. She bellows like a prune fed calf. There is outrageous humor here since a calf does emit a moaning sound. There is also the animal symbolism, but more important there is the suggestion of a preacher with the ability to stir the emotions of her congregation. This

ability is at the core of the call and response tradition which is the identifying feature of much negro music.

An effective speaker can evoke responses from his audience by means of convincing logic (Yeah, That's the truth, Ain't dat so), by glad tidings (Hallelujah, Ain't dat grand) or by a sad story (Ain't dat a shame). But the words alone aren't sufficient. The delivery must be emotionally convincing. "Ain't dat a shame" represents the response by Mrs. Bailey's audience. Even if she herself utters it in the form of a question it is sure to unleash a tidal wave of sympathetic responses from her audience. The same phrase is used as the title for another Bill Bailey song with a pause after each phrase allowing for responses by the onlookers who heard Bill in this instance do the crying. Mrs. Bailey's sorrow is not a private matter with her. She wants the whole neighborhood to join in and turn the affair into a camp meeting or revival hour.

Another famous negro religious custom is the Ring Shout, which is a compromise between traditional African dancing and the European aversion to dancing at a religious ceremony. The ring shout involves a crowd of worshippers shuffling around in a circle, never crossing their feet, to the accompaniment of a single musical phrase repeated over and over for hours at a time till they drop from sheer exhaustion. The endless monotony of the music, varied only by different rhythmic patterns and tonal shadings arouses a certain hysteria and religious ecstasy among the participants. The first 8 bars of Hughie Cannon's chorus describes a perfect musical accompaniment to a ring shout. There is a single musical phrase, repeated, followed by the revealing information "she moans the whole day long." All this is directed to a big gang hanging 'round. (Perhaps in a circle.)

This single musical phrase is strongly suggestive of another major negro musical device, the Field Holler. By usual definition a 'holler' is a fragmentary bit of yodel half sung, half yelled, usually rising or falling at the beginning and levelling off at the end by means of excessive portamento which usually includes a flatted third among other slurred notes. These hollers can be quite difficult to notate on paper. A relatively brief holler is reproduced on page 35 of AMERICAN NEGRO SONGS AND SPIRITUALS edited by John W. Work. There is more than a passing similarity here to the repeated phrase sung by Mrs. Bailey. Mr. Work goes on to say that with a little formal arrangement many of these hollers could serve as lines of blues.

The flatted third in the chorus of Bill Bailey is used in the manner usually associated with the Blue Note. This involves the placing of consecutive major and minor thirds with the resulting characteristic dissonance which creates a blues feeling. The same combination of notes is used in the chorus of other Bill Bailey songs such as SINCE BILL BAILEY CAME BACK HOME and FARE THEE HONEY, FARE THEE WELL.

The pentatonic scale which frames this musical phrase has the same range as that used in SWING LOW SWEET CHARIOT, the religious equivalent of the Come Home Song. Marshall Stearns, among others, mentions the similarity between the Stephen Foster song OLD FOLKS AT HOME and the spiritual DEEP RIVER. Both have the same opening three notes followed by an early octave jump. The two Bill Bailey songs by the team of Walter Wilson and John Queen, (AIN'T DAT A SHAME and FARE THEE HONEY, FARE THEE WELL) also use the same opening three notes with an early reach of the same octave although not reached in one jump. For that matter FRANKIE AND JOHNNY does the same thing with the opening notes reversed. Later songs by Hughie Cannon list him as the composer of AIN'T DAT A SHAME so it would appear that Walter Wilson is just one of his pen names.

There is a remarkable melodic consistency in the chorus of BILL BAILEY WON'T YOU PLEASE COME HOME. The odd numbered bars hit the 5th tone of the scale regularly on the first beat, while the even numbered bars hit the respective tonic 3rd and dominant 7th tones on their first beats. What makes the latter so unusual is that these notes (harmony notes and also potential blue notes) are used as part of the melody. It is a common occurrence for the tonic 3rd and dominant 7th to appear at regular intervals as part of the harmony only. Frequently a melodic line will demand the use of these notes as harmonic additives; CALLIOPE RAG, ALLEY CAT, 12TH STREET RAG (2nd), PICKLES AND PEPPERS, TICKLED TO DEATH, etc. etc. The two tones may be used separately as part of a melodic line, but seemingly never in conjunction with one another especially in such an obvious position as the first beat of every bar or every other bar. About the only other example of this 'melodic' treatment I can think of occurs in the trio of Joplin's STRENUOUS LIFE. Schuller states that "African music is unilaterally melodic, that is, not harmonic in structure. 'Harmony', where it occurs, is merely a concomitant of the melodic line." (EARLY JAZZ, page 39) This regular spacing of recurrent notes could place Bill Bailey in the category of a negro 'Work Song' where sound and muscular activity are synchronized at regular intervals. They also are somewhat suggestive of the African tendency to shift around a central tone, and, seen from a strictly instrumental standpoint, their odd-even bar treatment represents yet another variation of the call and response technique.

These odd and even bars are also rhythmically different from each other. The odd bars place the accent on the weak beats, but the even bars reverse this procedure. This technique avoids the studied and somewhat stilted effect obtained by the modern popular song CABARET. Undue emphasis on the weak beats is too obvious in a vocal solo and tends to monotony if the melodic line is constructed around the quarter note rather than the 8th note. This shortcoming, of course, can be easily remedied by a jazz band treatment.

These traditional negro effects are too numerous to be handled in a completely effective manner in any one song. Yet the appearance of so many of them in one 32 bar chorus is quite remarkable. In the last analysis though, Bill Bailey belongs in the negro ballad category, and in this context his songs are very impressive as was hopefully demonstrated in the first two chapters of this article.

There is no denying the fact that the Bill Bailey songs are primarily ragtime songs. But ragtime songs are emotionally one-sided, marked by sheer animal exuberance. The Bill Bailey songs, like the Blues, combine emotional opposites and extremes and,

although this combination doesn't automatically result in a meaningful expression, it does give Bill Bailey a certain significance not shared by other ragtime songs. Though by necessity not as profound as either the country blues or the classic blues, his songs nevertheless combine enough elements of the latter to justify his being mentioned in the same breath with the folk roots which gave birth to jazz.

(NEXT - PART 4 THOSE BILL BAILEY BLUES)

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LETTERS

Letters are welcome from members. We will attempt to answer questions pertaining to ragtime in this column. Full address of correspondent will be printed unless requested otherwise.

"Thought you might be interested in knowing that Steve Spracklen, ragtime piano player extraordinaire from Joplin, presented a program of classical ragtime at my school here in Kansas City.

The staff and my students have been thoroughly indoctrinated in the mechanics of ragtime, and were knowledgeable and demanding.

Young Spracklen gave a highly technical, polished performance and received a standing ovation at the conclusion of his labors.

We felt indeed fortunate to have Steve appear here, as he was departing the following week for his engagement at the Crazy Horse Saloon in Alexandria Bay, New York.

In our estimation, this talented young man has a bright future."

David W. Wallace Jr.
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

Mr. Percy Franks, a member residing at Kansas City, Missouri, mailed in his definition of Ragtime. As a surviving performer of the ragtime era he is qualified to speak out.

His letter states:

"In 1912 I played piano for silent movies and during the summer months was a piano player for a New York music publisher. From 1914 to 1918 I played piano in a vaudeville act."

His views are emphatic and uncluttered:

"Some ragtimers say ragtime should be played as written - note for note - wrong. Classical music - yes. Ragtime - never. There are good ragtimers and bad ragtimers. If you don't use imagination and don't take liberties, and play as written - that's bad ragtime....."

"Almost all of the old time popular tunes 1899 to about 1935 were all called ragtime, yes 2/4 - 3/4 - 4/4 - 6/8 time. Of course there were ragtime piano solos too....."

"To play good ragtime, you must have a good ear and you must have a sense of natural rhythm and syncopation, and be capable of improvising on the spur of the moment. The melody should always stand out. You should know at least 12 chords in every key, and you should know the best position with the left hand to play the desired chord to give it a brilliant effect....."

His summation is shared by many of the oldtimers of the ragtime era:

"Ragtime is a happy colorful music - You play it from the heart."

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"I attended Max Morath's show in Boston, 'Turn Of The Century'. He was superb in his role as ragtime pianist, singer and actor!"

"What a showman!!"

Mrs. Harold Smith
Wayland, Mass.

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RECORD REVIEW

by
TEX
WYNDHAM

Jazzology J-15 'Ragtime' by Tony Parenti's Ragtime Band and Ragpickers Trio

Selections: Grace and Beauty, Hiawatha, Praline, Swipesy Cakewalk, Sunflower Slow Drag, Hysterics Rag - performed by Wild Bill Davison, cornet; Tony Parenti, clarinet; Jimmy Archey, trombone; Ralph Sutton, piano; Danny Barker, banjo; Cyrus St. Clair, tuba; and Baby Dodds, drums. Crawfish Crawl, The Entertainer's Rag, The Lily Rag, Nonsense Rag, Cataract Rag, Redhead Rag - performed by Parenti, Sutton and George Wettling, drums.

Available from Jazzology Records, P. O. Box 748, Columbia, South Carolina, 29208

'On Sunnie's Side Of The Street'; Ralph Sutton, piano; Ruby Braff, cornet; Milton Hinton, bass; Mousey Alexander, drums.

Selections: Someday Sweetheart, A Hundred Years From Today, I Found A New Baby, Can't We Be Friends, I'm Crazy 'Bout My Baby, On The Sunny Side Of The Street, St. Louis Blues.

Available from the Blue Angel Jazz Club, 25 North Santa Anita Avenue, Suite L, Arcadia, California 91006

Project 3 PR5040SD 'Knocked Out Nocturne'

Selections: Honeysuckle Rose, I Got Rhythm, Snowy Mornin' Blues, Echo Of Spring, In The Dark, Viper's Drag, Hobson Street Blues, Eye Opener, Ain't Misbehavin', Love Lies, In A Mist, Alligator Crawl - performed by Ralph Sutton, piano; Bob Haggart, bass; and Gus Johnson, drums.

In The Ragtimer, second issue 1967, we reviewed a delightful Lp of band ragtime, Jazzology J-21, recorded under Tony Parenti's leadership. In the final issue for 1967, we commented at length on several Lps by the excellent New York style jazz pianist and ragtimer, Ralph Sutton. Today's review provides an opportunity to add more current information in both respects.

Jazzology has now reissued Parenti's first effort at recording band ragtime. Made in 1947 and 1948, these sides were originally issued on 78's on the Circle label, and appeared on Lp on the now deleted Riverside RLP 12-205. They were part of the early recordings of the ragtime revival during the forties, and also were among the first recordings to include Sutton -- made at a time when he was concentrating a good part of his considerable skill on ragtime.

Although the band tracks include a truly all-star aggregation of jazzmen, I find them less than satisfying as band ragtime. Perhaps the fact that ragtime had been dormant for so long contributed to the general uncertainty, but the band seems to me to lack cohesion. Wild Bill Davison's virile, vital style -- one of the most exciting sounds in today's traditional jazz scene -- is not really appropriate for ragtime (actually, he was apparently not Parenti's first choice for the session), and at times Danny Barker moves into a kind of shuffle rhythm on the banjo that gives the tunes a rather nervous feeling.

The trio tracks, however, are a different story. Sutton turns in a solid, light-footed performance, and Parenti's clarinet is completely sympathetic to the material.

On the whole, I find this a worthwhile Lp musically, and certainly an important one historically. And in fairness to the band tracks, I should add that their reissue has been warmly welcomed by other knowledgeable record reviewers.

Sutton has reportedly said that he doesn't enjoy playing rags any more, so it is a surprise and pleasure to find several tracks of his new Project 3 Lp devoted to material familiar to ragtimers. With four tunes composed by Fats Waller, and one each by Willie 'The Lion' Smith and James P. Johnson, fully half of the Lp is devoted to the New York ragtime style that Sutton plays so well. Toss in two compositions each by Bob Zurke and Bix Beiderbecke, and you have plenty of good material here for fans of two-handed, driving, traditionally-oriented piano playing.

As always, Sutton does not attempt to play from the original sheet music of the tunes, but his improvisations remain thoroughly within the confines of the New York style. The accompaniment is properly unobtrusive; even the presence of Yank Lawson, trumpet, and Bob Wilbur, soprano saxophone, for some background riffs on a couple of tracks do not detract in the least from Sutton's excellent performance.

The quartet Lp, recorded live at the Colorado night club where Sutton played for some time prior to going on the road with the modestly-named World's Greatest Jazz Band, has no ragtime on it. It is a relaxed jazz session in the updated traditional style often referred to as 'mainstream'. However, it contains plenty of first-class Sutton piano, as well as the warm, lyrical cornet of the tasteful Ruby Braff, and is a relatively hard Lp to locate (as far as I know, it is only available by mail). Consequently, as many ragtimers are fans of Sutton's playing, it seems appropriate to give this fine Lp a brief mention here.

CARE & PRESERVATION OF RECORDS

by DEAN TUDOR R. P. L.

Often people ask me about adequate facilities for records. Thus at this time I would like to outline a few points that should be considered: environment, shelving, first playing, cleansing, and continuing care. All of this assumes that you have proper equipment (e. g. low tracking force cartridges, etc.).

First, you must have an optimum storage environment. Sometimes this is not possible, for you live in an area as a home, not as a record storage cabinet (there are exceptions if you have over 1500 records!). Ideally, the moisture content of the record "room" should be maintained at 50% humidity at 70 Deg. F. This temperature should be kept constant. To prevent fungal damage, you should reduce fungal nutrients to a minimum by efficient cleaning and using non-fungal packing material such as plastic sleeves. Wherever possible moisture should not be allowed to gather on the disc surface. Records should be denied access of both ordinary sunlight and fluorescent lights. All discs should be stored in the vertical attitude, kept clean, free from rough surfaced packaging materials, and free from sliding contact with other disc surfaces.

Second, when not in use, your records should be shelved on edge only. Shelving in a vertical position without pressure on the disc surface and with no opportunity for an off-vertical attitude is needed, with storage in one of two types of compartments: (1) a compact metal shelf, with each compartment of a size to accommodate from one to two dozen packaged discs, or fillers to keep them upright without requiring use of force for insertion or removal of a packaged disc; and (2) shelves slightly larger than the jacket dimension, with well-aligned slotted metal strips on both top and bottom of the shelves to support each packaged disc independently of other discs. This area should be out of line from sunlight and excessive heat (radiators, vents, water-pipes, etc.). These conditions could lead to record warpage, rendering the record unplayable. If the warping is not serious, it can be corrected by placing several heavy books on the record to flatten it out. For this procedure it is necessary to place a foam rubber cushion or some similar cushioning material between the record and the objects weighting it.

Third, when playing a record for the first time there are several steps to follow to ensure "playability". Check for blemishes, warpage, and scratches. Also, check to see that the proper recording is included in the album (even sealed packages may contain a factory error). While listening, note any cracks or popping noises. Any one of the above conditions is a good enough reason to return the record to the store for a replacement copy or a refund. Insist on it.

Fourth, cleansing of records is important. You'd be surprised how well a record will sound after it has been "washed". The tired, old sound comes alive with a sparkle. To keep discs clean for periods of up to 5 months, employ an ethylene glycol solution (commercially available) sparingly applied with a brush and mohair applicator pad. For

drastic cleansing, wash the records in a solution of soap (not detergent) and lukewarm soft water. Rinse well in lukewarm soft water and use blotters or lint free tea towels to soak up the surplus water. Avoid excessive heat if possible. You should be especially careful of labels to avoid water damage.

Fifth, continuing care provides the best assurance of faithful sound reproduction. It is not easy to keep a recording in top condition for playback. Just one iota of dust in a groove will cause a pop when the record is played and perhaps even damage the stylus. The stylus itself could be damaging to records: it wears down and becomes sharp, gouging out the groove and the inside tracks. This is particularly bad for stereo records, especially when played on a turntable without compensating anti-skating devices. It goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway) that fingers must never touch the grooved area of a record. Oil left on the surface by fingers will collect dust, which will be ground into the grooves each time the record is played. Records must be handled on the edges only. Even the labels are susceptible to oil. Dust must be removed from your record before each playing. When a record is turned over, it should be cleaned, since the bottom side of a record will have picked up lint from the turntable while the top side was being played. The best way to remove dust and dispel the static charge usually found on records is to use a velvet-covered cylinder with an internal moisture wick that dampens the velvet. The nap of the velvet removes the dust from the grooves, and the moisture de-staticizes the record. Other de-staticizers, such as those in aerosol cans, are not recommended, since they leave a residue in the grooves that often derails light cartridges. When a record has finished playing, it should be cleaned and immediately placed in a plastic cover and returned to the record jacket for proper shelving.

Phono records need adequate care, and if given the good maintenance as outlined above, they will repay you with many more hours of good distortion-free music.

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* FINAL NOTICE
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* $5.00 - RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP - 1971
* IS OVERDUE AS OF JANUARY 1st.
*
* THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE NOT AS
* YET RENEWED ARE URGED TO DO SO
* IMMEDIATELY.
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SOMETHING DOING...

JOHN ARPIN	- at the Waldorf-Astoria, 8. 30 p. m. to 12. 30 a. m. in Toronto
GALE FOEHNER	- Last Chance Saloon, Rochester
KEN MAHERCY	- "Ragtime $ Bill" Holiday Inn, Lido Beach, Sarasota, Fla.
MIKE MONTGOMERY	- The Dakota Inn, Rathskeller, Detroit, Fri. Nights
MAX MORATH	- on the road with his show "At The Turn Of The Century"
LOWELL SCHREYER	- at Michael's Gay 90's Restaurant, Mankato, Minn. Saturdays
TREBOR TICHENOR	- and the Saint Louis Ragtimers can be heard on The Goldenrod Showboat in St. Louis, Missouri
PETER TURNER	- at The Bird Cage, Cambridge, England
TEX WYNDHAM	- and The Red Lion Jazz Band, at The Surry Restaurant 1100 Philadelphia Pike, Wilmington, Del.

Performers, please keep us up to date on your engagement schedule for this column.

Dedicated to Miss Irene Howley

LOUISIANA RAG

by

LEON M. BLOCK

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